

# Multiple Impairment & Experiences of Exclusion

---

Julie Schneider  
PhD Candidate, University of Sydney, Australia.

Supervised by  
Professor Gwynnyth Llewellyn & Professor Trevor Parmenter.

# Presentation outline

---

- Part 1.

Overview of research project.

- Part 2.

Experiences of exclusion in navigating service systems.

# Part 1.

## Research Purpose

---

- To explore what is happening in the everyday lives of adults who experience DeafBlindness.
- To theoretically understand how people who 'become' DeafBlind negotiate their place in a hostile world.

# Method: Grounded theory

---

- Symbolic interactionism
  - Social construction of reality
  - Individuals actively create meaning
- Abstract wonderment
  - Issues and concepts emerge from the 'ground' up
- Simultaneous data collection & analysis
- Constant comparative analysis technique

# Method: Data Collection

---

## Observation, Participation, Interviews

- Joined Australian email list group (observer).
- Joined DBA NSW as volunteer helper and researcher (participant observer).
- Recruited 8 participants for repeated in-depth interviews (in-person and electronic).

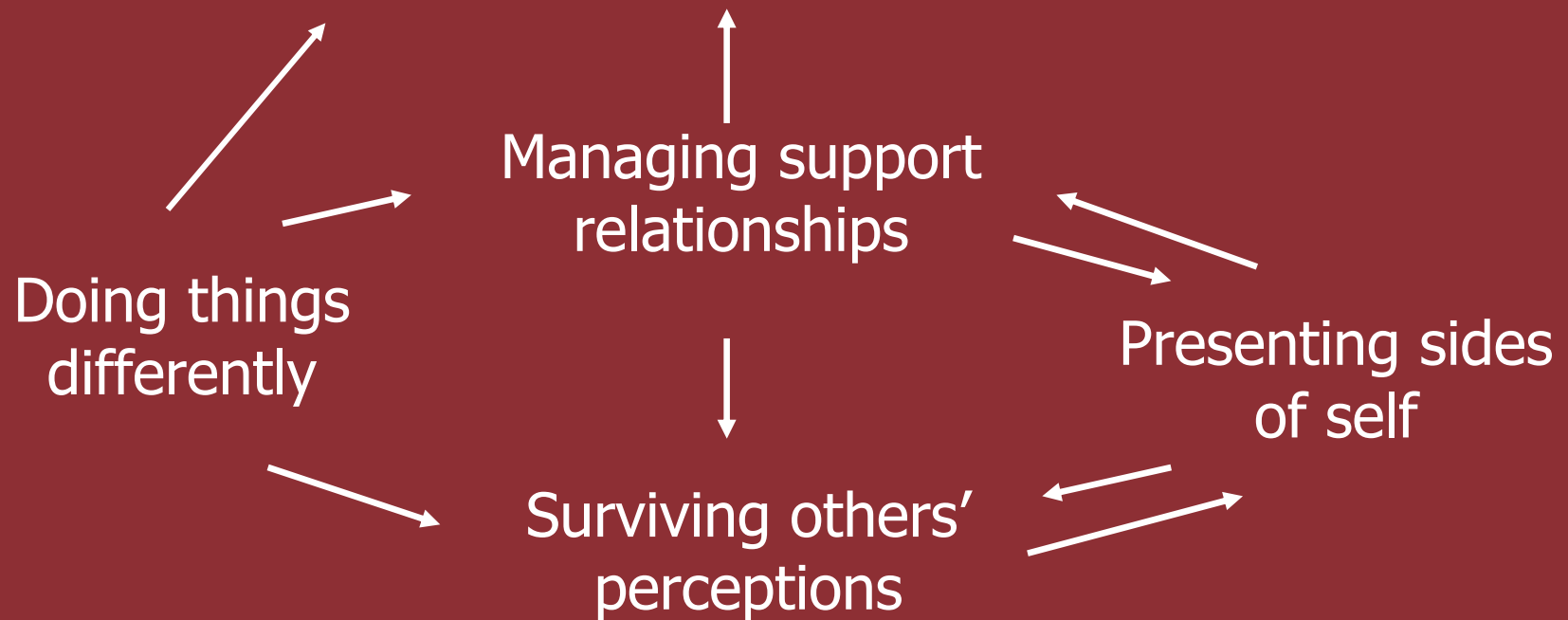
# Interview Participants

---

- 5 men (age 25-50), 3 women (age 30-52).
- Varied conditions & journeys  
(Ushers 1 & 2, CP, accident, surgery, viral conditions, mitochondrial disorders).
- Varied communication modes  
(Sign, large print, cochlear implant, hearing aids, tadoma, Braille).
- Varied social situations  
(Employment status, marital status, living situations).

# Findings

## Negotiating a place in a hostile world



## Part 2.

# Encounters with a hostile world.

---

Participants speak about difficulty navigating service systems.

Examples from the data.

# What do participants' experiences tell us?

---

- Engaging with service systems is complicated.
- Service systems focus on one impairment.

# What do participants' experiences tell us?

---

- Services available exclude people with combined impairments to some degree.
- It is too easy for systems to ignore or exclude minority 'cases'.

# Way forward?

---

- How can we make the world less hostile for people who are DeafBlind?
- Is it possible to change discourse?
- There are no easy answers!!!

# Contact details

---

Julie Schneider  
PhD Candidate  
University of Sydney

Email: [j.schneider@fhs.usyd.edu.au](mailto:j.schneider@fhs.usyd.edu.au)

Australian Family & Disability Studies Research Collaboration  
[www.afdsrc.org](http://www.afdsrc.org)